

MY HEART IS TRUE

Chapter I

An Autobiography of My Life an Association with Brigham Young University

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My interest and association with Brigham Young University came about in June of 1942, the time of my graduation from the Riverside Polytechnic High School in Riverside, California.

When I was a high school student, my primary interest was in music; I played as one of the solo cornets in the fine award-winning high school band of Poly High. In addition, I had the excellent opportunity of playing in Charley Nash's swing band, perhaps the finest professional dance bands in our area. In that band were three Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints players besides myself, Sterling and Richard Stott and Bill Bird.

This was shortly after the beginning of World War II, and Riverside was a central area for military personnel on leave from nearby March Air Base and Camp Hann. Soldiers from these bases as well as others on leave were looking for things to do, particularly girls to meet, and the best place to do this was at one of the community dances held at the Municipal Auditorium on Seventh Street and the School Administration Building close by. Additionally we were playing for dances in nearby San Bernardino, Redlands, Ontario, Colton as well as for local LDS wards and stakes.

Dancing was big time, and being in a fine dance band was akin to being a sports hero today. As members of Charley Nash's band we felt we were "hot stuff," playing at an average of three times a week. I remember, as a high school senior, there were weeks when I made more than my dad, who was a market manager for Safeway.

Not only were we making good money, but being in the band was an education in itself. We learned how to phrase musically, how to read swing rhythms, difficult syncopations; how to improvise (I always wished I could have been better); achieve greater endurance on our instruments; and learn to sight-read more effectively. As band members we liked to dress in a manner we called "sharp," and were using, even in those days, expression such as "cool." My favorite manner of dress was a camel hair sports jacket that fell almost to my knees, high waisted pants with pegged bottoms, brogan shoes, and a dress shirt and sharp tie.

When we weren't performing ourselves, we went to the Hollywood Palladium and the Trianon Ballroom in Culver City to hear the Big Bands, such as Glenn Miller, Jimmy Lunceford, Count Basie, Charley Barnett, Bob Crosby, Duke Ellington, Tommy Dorsey, and Les Brown. Two years later, while in the military service, I attended the audition for the Stan Kenton Orchestra at the Rendezvous Ballroom in nearby Balboa Beach, California. It was one of the great experiences of my music career.

What great opportunities these were—opportunities that provided me with an expertise that I used throughout my music education career, even to the present time.

About this time I was beginning to think of going to college, but did not know where. One day my good friend Grant McCarroll came to me, saying he was going to BYU and was searching for a roommate. Grant was a local basketball star and no doubt had a basketball scholarship. At that time I had a very vague understanding of BYU. I'm not certain if I even knew where it was located. But my mother knew. When I told her of Grant's invitation, she stated that that's exactly where she wanted me to go. I wrote for a catalog and on reading became excited about going. I checked on tuition costs, and inasmuch as my parents were without adequate funds, it became my responsibility to earn the necessary tuition. Fortunately, I was able to get a job at the post laundry at March Field, a nearby air base, and between that and playing dance jobs was able to save enough for a year's tuition to BYU.

Two of my memorable experiences in working at March Field were that I had the job of checking in the laundry bags of military personnel. March Field had a wonderful band, with several notable "big time" musicians. I remember looking at their name tags and fantasizing that I had their acquaintance, namely a Joe Bushkin who was recognized as one of the all-time, fine jazz pianists. The other experience was the opportunity to see and hear Bob Hope in one of his first military base performances. This event led to his war zone tours, which became virtually historical events.

Sometime during that 1942 summer I found that Grant McCarroll had changed his plans on enrolling at BYU and would be attending a nearby college. By this time I was firmly committed to attending the Y. I had read, with great interest, the historical accounts of the university; had found more on the music department, noting that the great LDS composer Leroy Robertson was a member of the faculty and conducted the University Symphony Orchestra, that Robert Sauer, who wrote "Springtime in the Rockies," was the band director, and that a John R. Halliday taught theory of music. But I was without a roommate, so I went to Sterling Stott, another friend who played tenor sax and sang with the Charley Nash dance band, and asked if he would be interested in going to the Y. I received almost an immediate response in the affirmative.

Things were looking better all the time, and both of us couldn't wait to get started, so we left for Provo three weeks early in order to find adequate housing, become better acquainted with the campus, and learn more about Provo. Fortunately we were able to find a room with a Mrs. Ellsworth, who had a room in her second floor apartment across the street from Allen Hall. While living there we found that Mrs. Ellsworth's son was a legendary track star at BYU.

Both Sterling and I heard about the fine student body dances held in the Joseph Smith Ballroom. We heard about dances sponsored by the men's and women's social units. We heard about Wayne Skeem and his Romance in Rhythm Band, a band recognized as

the best on campus, and this was where we wanted to be. Fortunately, Wayne, an outstanding trumpet player, agreed to our having an audition, which we were able to pass, and the two of us became full-time members of the band.

How well I remember those wonderful student dances that were beautiful social affairs. In the band were members that became long time friends, namely Ardean Watts, who later become associate conductor of the Utah Symphony; Sam Pratt, later a flutist with that symphony; Bob Evans, a fine high school band director and school administrator; Norm Hunt, later to become director of bands at BYU, then chairman of the music department at Sacramento State University; and trombonist Howard Worthen, who became a recognized medical doctor.

As mentioned, the weekend college dances were affairs to behold and the place you would want to be. The girls dressed in beautiful dresses or formals, and the men in their best suits or tuxes. Being in the ballroom of Joseph Smith Memorial Building at a Friday or Saturday night dance was indeed an aesthetic event. On the east end, where the band would be, was a beautiful picture window that looked upon Y mountain, and it was, and will always be, a sight to be remembered when the block Y is lighted at Homecoming or other memorable occasions.

The 1942 fall quarter at BYU was in a way an historical time, and it didn't take long for Sterling Stott and me to fall into the grand scheme of things. One of the great traditions at that time was to say hi to everyone you passed or met on campus. How well I remember the trek from lower campus, where I had a German and theory of music class, to the upper campus, where I had college algebra, religion, band and orchestra. It was a trek to be looked forward to, mainly because of the students I would meet, and their friendly hello. It was part of what we called "The Spirit of the Y."

For the first couple of weeks as underclassmen, we were expected to wear the freshman beanie cap that would easily identify us. One day I came upon one of the big men on campus who upon saying hi stopped and asked my name, then introduced himself as Mark Weed, the senior class president. I never forgot that introduction, and every time I saw Mark, I thought of him as my friend.

Perhaps the most historic event of the fall quarter was the annual BYU-University of Utah Football game. Being new on campus, I didn't at first recognize the importance of that game, but it didn't take long to become part of that great tradition. It seemed that BYU hadn't beaten the University of Utah for over twenty years and we were not looking forward to another defeat and the "wait till next year" attitude.

This year's game was to take place at Rice Stadium on the U of U campus in Salt Lake City, and I was in the marching band under "Bobbie" Sauer that was a vital part of the tradition. We bused to Salt Lake City early that Saturday morning in order to be part of the pep rally that traditionally took place in the lobby of the Hotel Utah. There we

formed a grand circle, with Professor Sauer conducting in the center, as we played medleys of school songs, namely the revered "College Song." This was my first and only time in being part of that grand tradition, but I was more than honored to have been a minor part of what I have always thought of as Professor Robert Sauer's "thing," for which he will always be remembered.

The game was another thing, hard fought, as BYU and U of U games always are, and in the end BYU came out victorious; but in that one game I became involved in the feeling that this was indeed "The Game," despite what happened the rest of the season. I still retain that feeling, as do so many alumni from both universities. For many years during my tenure as band director for the Y, I would become so overwrought on the eventual outcome that I occasionally left my seat in the stadium so as not to see that last play. I remember one football game in the 1960s; it was the last play of a game being played in Cougar Stadium. BYU was less than a touchdown ahead, the U of U had the ball within easy passing distance from the goal line. The level of excitement was so intense that I couldn't even look at that play but actually began to leave the stadium when the great cheer went up on our side, letting me know that we had prevailed. Another time at a basketball game at the University of Utah, we both were tied for the championship with BYU one point ahead and the U driving for the basket, with seconds left on the clock. I had the band sitting under U of U basket, and so intense was the excitement around me that I told my assistant, Grant Elkington, that I couldn't take it and had to leave. But before I could go very far the game was over, and again BYU prevailed. All these feelings have come about as a result of that victorious football game during my freshman year of 1942, a game that will always be a landmark with me and perhaps the turn-around year for BYU's eventual football fortunes.

Following that glorious football victory in 1942, BYU fans stormed on the field to capture the goal post and were met by indignant U of U fans. Naturally, an exciting skirmish began, and in an attempt to halt it, Robert Sauer ordered the band to play the National Anthem. For a moment the fighting ceased, only to begin following the Anthem's conclusion. Eventually the BYU fans prevailed; the goal post came down and was victoriously carried off the playing field. Next week we had a wonderful victory dance in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, where, as a favor, everyone was provided with a carefully cut piece of that goal post.

Life on campus was great, and college life had a wonderful appeal. I enjoyed my classes, especially the German class from Gerritt De Jong, dean of the College of Fine Arts, and a wonderful teacher. At the end of the quarter I actually received an A-. Then I had a Theory of Music Class from John R. Halliday, of which it was said that if you dropped your pencil in class you would be a chapter behind before you could pick it up. Dr. Halliday, in addition to being an excellent teacher, was a pilot and often took time off to ferry various military planes throughout the country. I thoroughly enjoyed the symphony orchestra under Prof. Leroy Robertson. For some reason I was able to achieve the seating of principal trumpet, a position that is normally reserved for upper classmen. Perhaps the

reason I achieved this was due to many students having been called into the service. But I appreciated the opportunity and endeavored to make the most of it. The highlight of the first quarter at BYU was the opportunity to perform the Beethoven Emperor Concerto with the noted concert pianist Andor Foldes. Not only did we play the concerto on the BYU campus, we had the additional opportunity of traveling to Prof. Robertson's home town of Mount Pleasant and performing there.

I do not remember too much about the BYU Band during that time. I liked Robert Sauer but never quite got into the swing of things. I do remember some of the fine players, namely Leo Vernon, who went on to a distinguished career at the Y; Jay DeGraff, an outstanding trumpet soloist; Lucille Sandberg, a wonderful clarinetist who became a full-time music faculty member and a good friend. I must mention Don Peterson, the outstanding French horn player, who at that time more than impressed me. Don was actually a Provo High School senior on loan to the BYU Orchestra because of the war time shortage in horn players. Don eventually became the legendary principal horn player for the Utah Symphony under Maurice Abravanel. Never have I been around a better horn player, and when I became virtually a full-time French horn player, Don set the mark that I never achieved.

I will always remember the Commons located in the basement of the Joseph Smith Memorial. This was a cafeteria where we would go for meals, ice cream and various snacks. It was also a favorite hangout where you could meet friends. It was a difficult place to find a seat because of its popularity, but always a joyful place to be. Then there was Calders, located on Fifth North and University. This was a favorite hangout of mine because of their ice cream; I have always been and will remain an ice creamaholic. I remember their meat pies that I ate so often for dinner, because they were very good and fell easily within my budget.

Then there were the unforgettable mat dances. While I can't remember if they were held in the Smith Building or elsewhere on campus, they were indeed fun affairs that we generally played for \$1.00 each at 5:00 p.m. every Tuesday Afternoon. As band members we looked forward to them, since it was a time when we could indirectly play through new tunes for use on the weekend dances. Speaking of pay—pay for our services at BYU dances was a far cry from what I was use to receiving with the Charley Nash Band in Riverside, California. There we received between \$15.00 to \$20.00 for each engagement, which was good money for those days, considering that the pay for a member of a big time band was in the neighborhood of \$125.00 a week. For BYU dances I remember receiving an average of \$3.00 for a three-hour engagement and the already mentioned \$1.00 for a mat dance. But we were young, and the important thing was that we were playing.

We were always paid in cash and very often in silver dollars, dollars that somehow found their way to Utah, since they were used in place of gambling chips at the casinos in Las

Vegas. Sterling and I made it a habit of saving every silver dollar we were paid. In this way we were able to pay our way home at Christmastime on the Union Pacific Challenger.

I can't remember why, but shortly after the fall quarter began, Sterling and I moved to a home on sixth west behind Timpanogas Elementary School. I do remember that we had a long walk in the dark to our 7:45 a.m. German class. It was beginning to get colder, and because we were from Southern California, this was a new experience for us. I remember that we bundled up and wore ear muffs, something I never experienced again once I acclimated to the cold Utah mornings. Shortly after Halloween the first snow fell, and what a thrill it was for us. Probably those students from the Intermountain Area thought we were sort of crazy when, in the evening, we played in the snow between the girls' dorm, Amanda Knight Hall, and the lower campus on University Avenue.

During that freshman year we were too busy with our studies, playing in the "Romance in Rhythm Band," and acclimating to college life that we had little time for girlfriends, but there was one girl we both liked from Tuscan, California, named Fern Francis. Being from Southern California, the three of us were unaccustomed to snow, and I am certain, as stated, students from Utah thought we were rather strange; on those evenings following a snow storm we would have such a great time playing in the fresh snows, then joyfully go to Calders for ice cream.

These were war years, and America's involvement in World War II had been less than a year, and we knew that we would eventually be called into the service. At the same time, we were enjoying university life so much that we wanted to postpone the inevitable as long as possible. So when the armed forces offered college students the opportunity to continue their studies by joining the Enlisted Reserve Corps, we jumped at the chance, the idea being that we would be permitted to remain in school unless there became a national emergency that would demand our services; then we would have a good opportunity of attending Officers Candidate School.

One Sunday evening, both Sterling and I were involved in a sacrament meeting service at the Sharon Ward in Orem, which meant that we would be permitted to sit on the stand. Sitting next to us was a girl, named Janie Thompson. It seemed that we became virtually immediate friends, a friendship that would last for a lifetime. What I can remember most is that we talked—rather whispered—throughout the entire meeting, and I am certain we must have created a real disturbance.

Jane, as virtually anyone having anything to do with Brigham Young University would know, became a legendary person through her great talent and work with students associated with the BYU Program Bureau. She was part of an extremely musically talented family from the small town of Malta, Idaho and at the time of our meeting was a senior and one of the most popular students on campus.

Jane was a great singer of popular ballads and later sang and recorded with Ike Carpenter's fine big band on the West Coast. I remember well her recording of "Little White Lies." Later she sang in Europe with the band that replaced the renowned Glenn Miller Air Corps Band, following Glenn's untimely death. In addition to being a fine composer of popular ballads, Jane had the great gift for adapting new lyrics to virtually any piece of music.

For some reason, Jane included us in several of her campus productions. I remember well the time she had me doing a sort of can-can dance with members of the varsity football team, following their defeat of the University of Utah. I believe I was sort of a comedy relief, barely one hundred and twenty pounds, along side those two hundred pound-plus athletes.

School assemblies were very popular in those days, and many were clever, original productions. One not so clever was the time I sang, with the band, the traditional Dixieland tune "I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate." While I'm not or have never considered myself a singer, I had done this tune with the Charley Nash Band in Riverside. I can't remember why I consented to do it. The lyrics were perhaps not the most appropriate for BYU, and I believe I had a somewhat guilty conscience in singing them. Immediately following the assembly I saw President Franklin S. Harris coming on to the stage of the Joseph Smith Auditorium with what I determined a stern look, and I wondered if he were coming after me. Feeling that discretion was the better part of valor I made an immediate retreat out the back door of the auditorium and headed for parts unknown. I never found if President Harris was coming after me, but I do feel that on that day I learned the valuable lesson of selectivity

Playing in Wayne Skeem's Romance in Rhythm Band was a fun experience, not only for the personnel and music we played, but the special bus Wayne had constructed, a bus similar to the stretch vans one sees today. It was always a neat experience to ride up to a ballroom area, where we would be playing, in this then unique blue and white vehicle with "Wayne Skeem Orchestra" emblazoned on the side, get out and walk into the ballroom, instrument case in hand. These were the days when being a musician and playing in a swing band was "hot stuff," and all of us felt sort of special.

During the Thanksgiving break, that wonderful freshman year, Wayne's band took a tour into Southern Idaho near the towns of Burley and Twin Falls. Wayne was well known in these areas, having been raised on a farm and graduated from one of the high schools. I remember we played an intermission break at an old movie house in Burley. This was a standard fare for the real big time swing bands, playing in famous movie theatres in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. In our imagination we were just like them. How thrilled we were when the curtain went up and we came on "swinging" one of Wayne's feature tunes.

Later in the program, Sterling sang Tommy Dorsey's wonderful arrangement of "Marie," the same that featured Jack Leonard and Frank Sinatra. As stated earlier, Wayne was a highly skilled trumpet player and featured himself on the famous Bunny Berigan's solo. During those days, I didn't own a trumpet, but played a cornet built by the Olds Company in Los Angeles. This was its top-of-the-line instrument, with off-set valves, an excellent instrument for concert band work and Dixieland playing. While it didn't possess the punching power of a trumpet, the cornet was capable of producing a beautiful, warm sound, which is part of the reason it is used so effectively in Dixieland playing. On this Burley, Idaho concert I was featured on a tune titled "Charleston Alley," taken from the then well-known Charley Barnet Band.

On this same trip we ran into a snowstorm, and while traveling on a seemingly small two-lane country road that may have actually been the main highway, we went into a skid and gradually rolled over as we hit a snow bank off the side of the road. We were out in the country with no other vehicles in sight, and I was the first out, climbing through a window and jumping into the snow. As I landed I made some strange remark that I can no longer remember, but we were all okay, and the bus suffered little if any damage. As soon as all were out we shoved and pushed on the bus till it was righted and back on the road. Then we went merrily on our way.

I loved, and still do love, any style of music performance, be it dance band, symphony orchestra, concert band, marching band, pit orchestra, rodeo band work, variety shows, recording work, etc. I think that I developed this love of playing because I was raised in the musical environment of Southern California where there were so many talented musicians associated with the movie industry, and could play any style of written music.

When attending a movie, I paid as much attention to the recorded music sound track as I did to the main story. One of our favorite pastimes was to go out into the lobby of a movie theatre during the presentation of a cartoon feature and just listen to the music without viewing the film. It was generally agreed that some of the best and most difficult musical arrangements and playing were accomplished during these features, and the way to really enjoy and listen to this artistry was by not viewing the film. So enthralled was I in learning and becoming a musician that I seriously wondered what ordinary people did for enjoyment.

Fall quarter ended all too soon, and it was time to go home for Christmas vacation. With the silver dollars we had saved, Sterling and I traveled on the Union Pacific Challenger. I can't remember the happenings of that Christmas vacation, but do remember I was anxious to get back to school, being fully converted to college life, particularly the type of college life that comes from being associated as a student at Brigham Young University.

On our return we found that Wayne Skeem, in order to escape the military draft, had opted not to return to the University for the winter quarter, but stayed home to manage

his family's Idaho farm, where his services were vitally needed. Fortunately, he agreed to leave his music and the new music stands we had cooperatively purchased, in order for us to continue with the band. The question was, who would take over as band leader? Curt Curtis, a fine pianist and a good looking announcer for the local radio station KOVO, offered to be our leader. At first the band members were excited about this possibility, until we found that he would only pay the band a percentage of whatever price he could contract for our services. For several reasons, such an arrangement was unsatisfactory to the members, and after considerable discussion, we decided that since we had purchased the music stands and had access to the music, why not continue the band as a cooperative venture? I took over as lead trumpet, Sterling continued to play tenor sax, sing ballads, and he agreed to be our up-front spokesman, calling tunes and giving tempos. In the band we had Freddie Gardner from Price, Utah, on lead alto; Hal Lund from Beaver, Utah, on 2nd alto; Sterling on Tenor Sax; the always excitable Bob Evans from Southern California on trombone and singing "skat" tunes; Howard Worthen from Provo, also on trombone; Cal Whatcott from Provo on trumpet; Sam Pratt from Provo on piano; Curly Jensen on bass; and Jack Anderson from Salt Lake City on drums. Fortunately the band continued, successfully playing for student body dances, social unit affairs, mat dances, and ward and stake dances as well as most any organization that desired our services. All of this continued until we were called into active duty.

Perhaps the most musically challenging activity that I encountered during the winter quarter was in the University Symphony Orchestra. Partially because there was a scarcity of qualified upper division trumpet players and hopefully because I had some expertise, I was chosen to play principal trumpet in that orchestra, while yet a freshman. For our winter concert, Professor Leroy Robertson selected, as the featured composition, Tchaikovsky's demanding *Fifth Symphony*, partially, I believe, because of Don Peterson, our superbly talented French horn player. Don would have the responsibility of performing the difficult solo in the Andante Cantabile movement, a solo that had been popularized under the title "Moon Love." It's nevertheless a solo required as standard repertoire of any French horn player auditioning for a major symphony orchestra.

At that time Professor Robertson was recognized as perhaps the most recognized composer in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In later years he would receive the \$25,000.00 first place award for his composition *Trilogy*, which until then was the largest award ever presented for a musical composition in the Western Hemisphere.

The *Fifth Symphony* had the most challenging and demanding trumpet part I had ever experienced until that time. The rhythm of the closing fanfare on the finale movement was particularly troublesome to me. It seemed that every time I tried it, it was unsatisfactory to Professor Robertson. Trying to play that musical passage led me to an incident that made Professor Robertson a lifetime friend, and an incident he never forgot.

I was from an outstanding high school instrumental music program, under the legendary tutelage of Lester Oaks; and whenever we encountered a musical problem, as I was experiencing with the Fifth Symphony, Mr. Oaks would call us into a special sectional rehearsal. So given the problems I was experiencing, it seemed only natural to me that Professor Robertson call a special rehearsal with the brass section.

One afternoon I went to his office on the lower campus, knocked on his door, introduced myself, then made my request, asking if I could assemble the brass players, and would he be willing to conduct us in a special sectional rehearsal? The request seemed innocent enough to me, but must have made an impact on Professor Robertson, for he stated that this was the first time a student had ever made such a request, and he would be pleased and would certainly honor my request. To me, this example of a seemingly simple action led to life-long major results. Not only did this help solve a musical problem, make a remembered friend, but became a practice that I have followed throughout my conducting and professional career.

For church services we attended sacrament meeting in the auditorium of the Joseph Smith Memorial Building. At that time BYU did not have the ward and stake structure that exists today. I remember that the auditorium was always filled on Sunday mornings, which meant passing the sacrament took a large portion of the meeting, leaving little time for the speakers. In order to facilitate this, I was impressed when student Priesthood leaders instructed us take the trays by the left hand as we partook of the bread or water by the right hand. I am certain that this cut the time virtually in half, leaving sufficient time for the speakers and leading to a practice that I continue to follow today.

Around midterm time, those of us that were in the Enlisted Reserve Corp received notice that we were being called to active duty and would leave the university as a combined unit on April 12, 1943. I wasn't too surprised, since the war was not progressing well. But being young, I was not overly concerned. I did know that BYU had become an important and vital part of my life and that I would terribly miss college life and all that was associated with it. While being in the Enlisted Reserve Corp supposedly meant that we would be considered as candidates for officer training, this was not a prime concern of mine! I was aware of the existence of many fine military bands, particularly the excellence of the band stationed at March Field, as well the air corps band stationed in Santa Ana, California, which consisted of outstanding players that had been associated with the movie recording industry in Hollywood. This, then, is what I wanted to do during my pending years in the armed forces.

During the winter quarter I had become acquainted with Norman Hunt, a junior music major and fine trombonist, who had transferred to BYU from the Dixie College in St. George, Utah. Norm was a married student playing in the University Symphony Orchestra, and like me was in the Enlisted Reserve Corp, and interested in getting into a military band while on active duty. Fortunately for both of us, we heard that Max Dalby, the solo clarinetist with the Kearns Air Corp Band located near Salt Lake City, would be

visiting the campus. Being a former student at BYU, Max was well known in the area, and he was from the musically well-known Dalby family. Max later became one of the central figures in Utah music education due to the excellent high school bands he produced in Ogden, as well as the fine bands of Utah State University. Both Norm Hunt and I made it a point to visit with Max, letting him know of our desires to get into a military band, especially one associated with the army air Corps. We also told him we would be at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City a short time prior to being shipped somewhere for basic training. Max promised us that he would see that a request came from Kearns to have us shipped there for our basic training; then we could request a formal audition for the Kearns Band.

Time was rapidly winding down before we would leave the excitement of college life and move on to whatever life was ahead in wartime service in the armed forces. Both Norm and I felt we had an excellent chance of eventually being assigned to Kearns for our basic training and then on to its band, with the associated opportunity of continuing our music education. Sterling, on the other hand, had opted to try for the flying service of the army air corps and become an aviation cadet. He later received his commission as a bombardier and went on to a distinguished career flying B 24s in some of the most dangerous missions in Africa and Italy.

The night prior to our reporting for active duty, the BYU Symphony Orchestra had its winter concert in which we performed the difficult *Fifth Symphony* of Tchaikovsky. The concert was played in the auditorium of the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, an auditorium with an accompanying stage, noted for its marvelous acoustics. In later years, when the French National Symphony performed there, its conductor, Charles Muench, remarked that he and the orchestra considered the J.S. Building as having the finest acoustics of any auditorium they had played in on their American tour.

Our concert went well, I felt good about my playing, and Don Peterson performed his horn solo magnificently, all of which was a wonderful conclusion to a never-to-be-forgotten freshman year at BYU.

The following morning, Sterling Stott, Norm Hunt, I and a couple of hundred others met on the parking lot adjacent to the J.S. Building. Buses, along with what seemed most of the remaining student body, were there waiting to say adieu and see us transferred to the railway station in south Provo. Janie Thompson presented Sterling and me with our 1942-43 Banyan yearbooks and inside had written an original commemorative tune honoring our unforgettable first year at the university we had learned to love. Then it was on to Fort Douglas to whatever lay ahead.

MY HEART IS TRUE

Chapter II

Life in the Military

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Inasmuch as this narrative has as its primary concern an account of my life and association with the Brigham Young University, an association that lasted well over forty years, only a brief account as possible will be provided regarding the three plus years of military wartime service, a service that was without noteworthy heroic consequences when considering the associative wartime activities of so many others. Perhaps the best that can be said is that "I did my duty in serving my Country in whatever capacity I was called." However, these were highly educative years that prepared me, as well as anything, for whatever lay ahead.

On the afternoon of April 12, 1943 we arrived at Fort Douglas, which served as a reception center for those being called into active duty. All of us were confused, perplexed, somewhat apprehensive and concerned about what lay ahead. For the next several days we were issued uniforms, which hardly fit, and took various tests that I'm certain determined our eventual fate. We had a physical exam, along with the accompanying shots, always with the jeers from the more veteran inductees, who shouted, "You'll be sorry," and "Watch out for the square needle."

We learned what it was to be on K.P., as well as tricks on how to avoid such assignments. The most notable being: rather than fall out on the street in front of our barracks for early morning roll call, some of us would remain in the barracks, close to a window where we were supposed to line up. Then when our name was called, we would shout a loud, "Here!" This way we could avoid the dreaded K.P. and other assignments that were issued to those standing at attention on the street. While being in the service was to me a tremendous educational experience it was also an experience in learning how to "goof off," thus avoiding those unwanted assignments.

It seemed that Norm Hunt and I waited at Fort Douglas about two weeks before our transfer orders to Camp Kearns arrived. The camp was only a short trip from the Fort Douglas, being somewhat southwest of Salt Lake City. Upon arrival we were assigned to a barracks and told that we would be part of a basic training flight.

I remember that we were lined up outside the barracks, our drill instructor giving instructions, when he said: "Look at the person next to you. In six months, one of you may be dead if you don't take these basic instructions seriously." Norm and I looked at each other, then shook our heads as if to say, "No way."

Basic training consisted of ten weeks of close-order drill, physical exercises, lectures, testing, weapons training and taking our turns on K.P. Before appearing at the band headquarters for an audition, I was told I had qualified and was to be sent to surgical technician school. However, at the first opportunity, Norm and I appeared for an audition and were told that we had passed, and as soon as the basic training was completed we would be assigned to the band. Camp Kearns had a wonderful band, and naturally we were thrilled with this great possibility.

This was during April and May of 1943, and Utah was experiencing cold Spring weather. We found that Camp Kearns was an unhealthy place, even receiving the nickname "Pneumonia Flats." The one thing we didn't want to happen was to have our training interrupted by going to the hospital, since we had been told that on a hospital release it would be necessary to resume our training from the very beginning. The result was that many of us would hang on despite any health problems we might be experiencing.

About three-fourths into our training I began to experience a sore throat, coughing, chills and hoarseness. I was determined to finish my basic training and persisted until one morning I knew I couldn't go on and reported to sick bay. Like so many others, I had contracted bronchial pneumonia. I can remember feeling ill only one day, due to the excellent treatment and sulfa drug I was administered; however, as was the practice, I had to stay in the hospital ten weeks and was then sent home on a thirty day rehabilitation leave.

The thing I can remember about my hospital stay is that we were supposed to stay in bed, but when the hospital staff went off duty, our ward room turned into a virtual gymnasium, with patients running up and down the corridors, doing hand stands and other sorts of exercises. I had Norm bring my cornet and began to practice. Later the doctors told me that this had a strengthening effect on my lungs and led to my cure.

Toward the end of my hospital stay I inherited a little business of going to the hospital post exchange and purchasing various items for the other patients still confined to bed. I would go about the various ward rooms making a list of needed toiletries and then make the necessary purchases with a slight surcharge for each item. In this way I was able to effectively finance my rehabilitation leave.

The leave was wonderful. Later I found that such leaves were cancelled, when hospital administrators found that rehab patients were returning in worse health than when they left. I returned in excellent health, but was concerned about beginning basic training from the very beginning. Fortunately I was placed in a group titled "Flight F" and within a week had completed my training.

In the meantime, Norm had been assigned to the Kearns Band and was firmly entrenched, playing in the Radio Band, a band that made weekly broadcasts over one of the local Salt Lake City stations. Upon my arrival I was just another trumpet player in a large band with little hope of making the prestigious Radio Band. My assignment was basically playing in the marching band for retreat ceremonies and other special occasions.

One special occasion was traveling throughout the state with the "This Is the Army Show." One day we were in Brigham City playing at the large facility that later became the Intermountain Indian school. I remember going to the dining hall for dinner and in the line next to us were prisoners of war that were incarcerated at the facility. To our surprise, we found that they were being served a much fancier meal than we. This brought about some interesting and colorful

comments from several members of the band, an action referred to in the military as "griping," a condition when something didn't fit one's personal expectations.

Most military bands had a dance band, and the air corps became well-known for the excellence of these dance bands that played most often for officer clubs, non-commissioned officer clubs, and services clubs, as well as certain civic functions. One day I was invited to sit in, playing lead trumpet, at a rehearsal of the Kearns dance band. I must have done well, because I was invited to become the regular lead player. Naturally I was elated, feeling that I had broken into the circle of excellent players in the band, and it would only be a matter of time before I found a position in the radio band, but the die was cast, for unbeknown to me, orders had already been cut for my transfer. The Kearns band was too large and according to army regulation it was only to be a certain size. Someone had to go! Since I was the newest member, I was among the first to be considered, even before I had the opportunity to prove myself.

News came of my transfer one morning as I was preparing to leave as part of a cadre of bandmen assigned to play at some nearby function. I was in my class A uniform and was just hoisting myself onto the truck when Master Sergeant Mills tapped me on the shoulder and stated: "By the way, Ballou, you're transferring out today, so you won't be making this function." I was shocked and mad at the same time. Sergeant Mills, knowing this all the time, had seen me preparing to go with the band, and I have always felt he wanted to make a dramatic announcement in the presence of several band members, thus in some way impressing them and showing his authority.

Norm and I said a hurried good-bye as he and the other band members drove off to their assignment. I made my way back to the barracks in somewhat of a daze and began packing. Later that day, with my instrument and barracks bag, I was bused to the railway station in Salt Lake City and boarded a troop train to an unknown destination.

I can't remember too much about the trip. I do remember drawing K.P. duty, which wasn't too bad, since it helped relieve the boredom. I remember traveling through parts of Colorado, then through the panhandle of Texas, until we arrived in San Antonio. I was then transferred to the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center near Kelly Field. There I was billeted in a large army tent with about ten others. None of us knew why we were there or what the future held.

For the next few weeks we were pretty much on our own, experiencing little contact with officers or receiving any military orders. We were treated very well, even taken to some excellent barbecues at the well known Kelly's Grove. Being in the South, I remember walking the company streets and hearing servicemen from the North and South still verbally fighting the Civil War. I enjoyed going into San Antonio, seeing the Alamo and strolling along the river with its colorful restaurants and other sights. However, I was beginning to feel we were sort of misfits, lost in the shuffle of the military activity that took place in this part of Texas. Later I found this was partially so, for in order to justify our existence and give a reason for our being at Kelly Field, we were given the official classification as Reclassified Aviation Cadets, even though this wasn't so!

In an effort to stay in shape on our instruments and give ourselves something to do, several of us got together and formed what turned out to be a pretty good band. We were provided a rehearsal space and began to rehearse. For music we had a few stock dance band arrangements, met two times each day, constantly running through and perfecting the well known Glenn Miller's theme, "Moonlight Serenade." I still play this same arrangement today and each time remember those days in San Antonio.

Orders finally came for some of us to report to band headquarters at Kelly Field for another audition, this time to determine if we were good enough for reassignment to another army air corps band. The audition was pretty easy; perhaps the person in charge had empathy for us, knowing of our desires to remain as bandsmen and avoiding another unwelcome assignment. I know that I was grateful to the little band we had formed at SAAC, thus enabling me to stay in shape and successfully pass the audition, as easy as it was.

It wasn't long till I was ordered to report for transfer to a band somewhere in the Aviation Training Command in Texas. The band where I became stationed was at Laughlin Field, near the border town of Del Rio, some 120 miles from San Antonio. Laughlin Field was known as a transition school for newly commissioned second lieutenants assigned to fly the then dangerous B-26 bomber, an airplane that had earned the nickname "Flying Coffin," but an airplane that had the safest wartime combat record. Later, Laughlin Field became well known as the base for the U-2 "spy plane," which became well known for its historic flights over Russia.

The 506 Air Corps Band was stationed on the far end, just off the runway, of Laughlin Field, and away from the other men stationed on the base. The base commander often told us he thought the musicians were different from the others, and he wanted to keep us apart. Perhaps it was really because of the rehearsal noise we made, and he didn't want the other men disturbed. The result was that the nearest barracks were two blocks away with an abandoned mess hall in between. We liked the privacy this afforded, and we essentially had our own little community. For headquarters there was a divided building that served as rehearsal hall and office. Another was converted into a subdivided company room where we could relax, read and entertain visitors, and the other half as a supply room. Two barracks were used, one for those in the dance band, because they were often out late at night, and the other for those that made up the more formal concert portion of the band. Next to us were two abandoned barracks that we used for individual practice. We even had our own ball field where terrific baseball and football games often took place between the married and single men in the band.

The director of the band was a Master Sergeant Sullivan, with over thirty years in the military. Sergeant Sullivan was an avid lover and admirer of technically difficult circus band music, and it was common for us to be heard on parade playing such marches as "Barnum and Bailey's Favorite," "Colossus of Columbia," "The Washington Grey's," and "Thunder and Blazes," marches that featured lots of sixteenth note runs that had to be practiced to be played correctly.

Sergeant Sullivan, while not a great band leader, was very likeable and proud of his long service record in the army. I personally liked him and enjoyed talking to him about his experiences with

various military bands. While we didn't realize it at the time, life under his leadership was relaxed and carefree. We always did our job, but were free to go into Del Rio every weekend and each day if we desired, following retreat parade.

It was at Laughlin Field and Del Rio that I developed a lifetime interest in golf. One of the band members had purchased an old car, and on days following retreat parade several of us would hop in the car and make our way to the Del Rio Municipal Golf Course for an always enjoyable and relaxing game. One of my favorite pastimes was to obtain an occasional three-day pass and hitchhike my way to San Antonio. Hitchhiking during those wartime years was always easy for a serviceman. On these passes I was never certain where I would end up or spend the night. My plan was that if I came to any golf course I would ask the driver to let me out and I would have a wonderful time playing that course, following which I would then continue my hitchhiking adventure. This way I was permitted to play many of the famous country club courses that today are used for major PGA events.

Our tenure with Sergeant Sullivan was short-lived, for despite these being wartime years, he was discharged from the service due to age and the many years of honorable service. As his replacement we received Warrant Officer Sydney Bowden, a fine musician and conductor, as well as a graduate of the Julliard School of Music. Unfortunately, Mr. Bowden was not liked by members of the band. To his credit he made us into a fine-sounding organization, but his methods met with disapproval by the musicians under his command. It seemed that he failed to realize we all had a love of music with a fervent desire to play well and be the best we could. It seemed that he felt it was necessary to resort to strict discipline and coercion to enable us to do a fine job. All this led to bitter feelings between both parties.

Most of the musicians in the band played their own personal instruments, even though this was not a requirement of the military. Each of us had the opportunity to check out regular army-issue instruments that we used only for parade functions, saving our own for more formal concert use. I was now playing a Vincent Bach Mount Vernon Stradivarius trumpet that I was fortunate enough to purchase while home on furlough. New instruments of this caliber were virtually impossible to purchase, due to wartime manufacturing restrictions. I had found the instrument at the San Bernardino Branch of the Hollywood Lockies Music Exchange, a branch that was closing due to the difficulty in maintaining sufficient stock. I was visiting the store when one of the sales clerks brought up, from the basement, a new Bach trumpet that the management forgot they had. When I saw the instrument I knew I had to have it, so made immediate arrangements with my family for its purchase.

This instrument, along with the following factors, led to my musical development during my air corps band experience. Among those being two technique books titled *Top Tones for the Trumpet* by Walter M. Smith and Max Schlossberg's *Daily Drills and Technical Studies*. Then there was the opportunity for daily rehearsals, concerts, playing for dances, retreat parades, formal reviews, the traveling USO Shows, the excellent musicians I was associated with, and a custom-made mouthpiece I had built by Harry Jacobs in Chicago.

Among the fine musicians was George Bone, a premier jazz clarinetist that had been selected by *Down Beat* magazine as one of the ten most up and coming jazz players in the country. George was also the brother of "Red" Bone, an outstanding arranger who was then writing for the Radio City Music Hall in New York City. "Red" might be best known for his arrangement of "Song of India," written for the great Tommy Dorsey Band. George led our dance band, "The Laughlin Field Bombers," and "Red" sent to us copies of all the appropriate music he had arranged for the Music Hall. The arrangements, in themselves, were masterworks, without an ill-placed note, all of which gave the "Bombers" a wonderful swinging sound, making them a joy and thrill to play.

As we traveled about the State of Texas we were billed as a band with a sound and quality equal to the wonderful "Les Brown Band of Renown." One of our assignments was playing for the various charitable balls honoring the birth date of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Generally the bandsmen were paid for dances, but on these occasions we were required to donate our services. On one such occasions, the person in charge announced that he would like to thank the band for donating their services, when someone in the audience shouted in a broad southern Texas drawl: "Donating their services." Then he immediately pulled from his pocket a really large wad of money and proceeded to provide each member of the band a substantial sum.

When I first became a member of the "Laughlin Field Bombers," I played third trumpet. Our lead player was an older, experienced player named Arthur George. Art was a tremendous player with great endurance and seemed to get stronger and better the longer we played. He had been drafted, was married and was living off base with his wife, when orders came for him to be shipped to India to a non-air corps band. Naturally this came as a shock to the band. Being single and much younger, I felt I should be sent in his place, only to be told I had theoretically volunteered for the air corps, and couldn't be transferred to another branch of the service. This later saved me from being sent to Europe as an infantry replacement when the Battle of the Bulge took many drafted men from our base.

We had a wonderful second trumpet player who had been trained at the prestigious Curtis School of Music in Philadelphia and was gifted in playing jazz. Unfortunately for the band, he possessed a limited upper range and would not be well suited to play lead. At that time I had a respectable upper range, and despite my limited experience I became the lead player. I remember walking to lunch with the fourth tenor sax player when he stated I couldn't play the lead and would never be a satisfactory replacement to Arthur George. I took this as a personal challenge, and within two weeks had made such an improvement that I was successfully filling the vacated part. Part of this rapid development came as the result of several USO Shows we were required to play, and I simply had to rise to the occasion. Another was our wonderful Curtis School of Music second trumpet player who took me under his personal charge and taught me many things that I have used throughout my professional career. And there was George Bone, who had experience playing with the great trumpet player Bunny Berigan and with the Charley Barnett Band.

George Bone was a consummate musician and a terrific leader. I owe so much to him. He was also very philosophical. I can remember him saying: "Notes on a page of music are merely guides to let you know where you are. The actual music must come from your heart and soul." Another

time, during a personal practice session, I was having success hitting some high F's above high C, when I exclaimed: "George did you hear those high F's I was hitting?" His answer was: "Yes, but can you play them?" He did have a terrific way of building up your confidence but also being very practical. One time when we were playing for an officers club in San Angelo, Texas, I played a full chorus on the Rodgers and Hammerstein tune "If I Loved You," from their musical *Carousel*, after which one of the officers came up to George and said, "What Big Band did that trumpet player play with?" George cautiously mentioned two or three famous bands. The officer was impressed, even making a fuss over me, and I came away feeling, "George believes I could really play with those bands." He could also be somewhat "cutting." From time to time an enlisted man or even an officer would come up to him, during a performance, and state that he had played with such and such big band. George would ask him what instrument he played, then borrow one of ours, hand it to the person, then say, "Play something." I don't ever remember any person accepting the challenge.

The air base at Eagle Pass, Texas, had a wonderful band under the direction of the legendary trombonist Bobby Byrnes. Bobby, as a civilian, had played with the Jimmy Dorsey Band, being hired to show up Jimmie's brother, Tommy Dorsey, with whom he had a constant ongoing feud.

At that time, the Eagle Pass Band was better than ours and had challenged us to a "Battle of the Bands," which we accepted! At the event we were doing well, but not exceeding theirs, when George called "Blue Lou," a tune that featured him on clarinet. He then played so magnificently that the rest, as they say, "was history." And despite the excellence demonstrated by trombonist Bobby Byrnes, everyone came away feeling we had truly won the day, not because of our ability, but for the artistry of our leader.

George Bone had a constant habit of borrowing money, but never kept a record of what he owed. In the military it was the custom, at that time, of paying everyone in cash. When we lined up on pay day, George would make certain that he was first in line, then would stand in the exit doorway with cash in the palm of his hand, so that as we walked by we would have the opportunity of taking exactly what we felt he owed. Because all of us admired George so much, I sincerely doubt if anyone ever took all that was owed, but I do know that by the end of pay day George was broke, and the borrowing routine would begin again.

As members of the 706 Air Corps Band, life was pretty easy, but I am certain none of us fully realized it. Musically we could play just about what we wanted, not resorting to any commercialism. At day's end we were generally free to go where we wanted, be it a movie, going to Del Rio, spending time at the service clubs, practicing, roaming about the base, or merely spending time in the barracks. I did enjoy going over to the flight line, looking at all the planes and observing the flying routine that was taking place. Perhaps the reason we didn't fully appreciate our life style was that we felt we were always subject to the whims of those of a superior rank and that we were not exactly free. Then we missed home and family life. I know that I did, and I also longed to be back at BYU and simply enjoy all those things associated with university life.

Before my going into the service, my mother had arranged for me to have a patriarchal blessing, and among other things it stated that I would have the love and affection of a choice daughter of Zion, that I was blessed with a noble birthright of Ephriam, that I would be remembered for my conduct and integrity, that I should fear no man except those that may be influenced by the spirit of the adversary, and that I should overcome evil with good.

While I was lacking in an understanding of many gospel principles, I did know that I wanted to honor my parents, that I wanted to uphold those things promised in my patriarchal blessing, and I knew what was expected of me in order to satisfactorily return to BYU. All these, I am certain, with the many temptations that can come from being in the military, kept me from doing things that would dishonor my chances of not fulfilling my goals, the blessings and promises made, and the opportunity of returning to BYU. These things were foremost in my mind, and I doubt if a day ever passed that I didn't reflect on them.

I appreciated the letters I received from Janie Thompson. I know she wrote to many of us who were in the service. One letter that really amused me was composed of cut out words and letters from leading magazines, of all sizes, description and character, then pasted them on sheets of typing paper to form a more than unique letter. I realized how much time it must have taken, which more than doubled the appreciation of receiving mail from a friend or loved one, and helped keep the spark of returning to BYU continually burning.

Early in 1945 we were ordered to have a comprehensive physical exam as well as another audition, all of which made us wonder what was going on. Then some of us who did not pass either exam were shipped out, and new replacements soon arrived, replacements that played well and were physically fit. Soon we were told we were to begin overseas training and that this band had been hand-picked to do the job of hedge hopping about the Pacific, playing shows and other performance activities, for those in combat areas. We also received word that the great trumpet virtuoso Billy Butterfield would be joining us at a later date. Billy was a player I was fully acquainted with particularly for his solo on Artie Shaw's recording of "Star Dust." Naturally I was excited, realizing I would be sitting next to one of America's premier players and would in essence receive a lesson every day.

Our overseas training consisted of lots of running, with much concentration on the obstacle course, an activity that caused me little concern, since I had spent considerable free time on the course for my own personal physical conditioning. The only portion of the course that proved difficult was rope climbing, because I was somewhat weak in my arms and shoulders, but the rest of the course was, as they say, a "piece of cake." We attended lectures, had some close order drill, and had a series of medical shots, along with workouts at the base gym. Outside of these activities our lives were basically the same as before with perhaps even more concentration in honing the musicality and ensemble sound of this hand-picked group. We continued to play for dances at the officers club as well as other service clubs. We performed at the daily retreat ceremony, attended parades, and participated in formal reviews, along with concerts and certain civic functions. It seemed that our so called overseas training barely interrupted the routine of our normal schedule.

One day orders came down for us to attend the firing range for training and to see if any of the bandsmen could qualify for the ratings of marksman, sharpshooter or expert.

When trucks bearing personnel from the firing range arrived at our barracks we sensed a certain nervousness on their part, as if to say, "What can we expect from this weird bunch of musicians? We'd better be careful, or they might end up shooting one of us." Members of the band were all pretty sharp, being professional, university or conservatory trained, and immediately picked up on this concern. We decided among ourselves to teach them a lesson, so when it came time to do practice firing with the various types of weaponry, we purposely fired at wrong targets, at the side of the hill, or on the ground, all the time being careful not to endanger anyone. Finally the instructor bellowed out; "Let's see if any of you characters can come even close to qualifying." That's when we settled down and began firing seriously, even breaking the camp record in accuracy, firing the carbine, pistol and a form of machine gun we called a "grease gun." On the way back to the barracks the firing range personnel became friendlier, and we all had a wonderful laugh.

Sometime before we had the personnel of the band upgraded, I detected another amusing incident when one day our bandmaster, Mr. Bowden, was tuning the band by having each member sound an individual B-flat concert. As he was tuning the clarinet section, I noticed the solo clarinetist fussing with his instrument, as if checking his reed and the function of the keys. When Mr. Bowden pointed to the last chair player for his B-flat, I observed the solo clarinetist sound a B-flat as the last chair faked his. I immediately thought, "What's going on here?" Later when I talked to the solo clarinetist, I asked him this question, and he laughingly stated, "Didn't you know? Walter can't play a note on clarinet and in fact knows nothing about music." I never found how he got in the band in the first place or what happened when the overseas auditions and physicals took place. I only knew that he was no longer with us.

Slightly before the ending of hostilities in Europe and on April 12, 1945, we received word that President Franklin D. Roosevelt had passed away while at his favorite Warm Springs in Georgia. Formal ceremonies honoring his life began to take place on most military bases. One of the assignments we received was to attend a review at the air base in Eagle Pass, Texas. Eagle Pass was the home of an advance training facility for aviation cadets prior to receiving their commission. During the ceremony, with the band and all the cadets lined up on the flight line, we witnessed a flying demonstration by a fighter pilot who had just returned from combat duty in Europe. As he passed the reviewing area, and flying at a very low altitude, he went into what was referred as a victory roll. As he did he lost both wings of his fighter, spiraling like a rocket to the end of the runway, where he crashed, losing his life. All of us were shocked and I heard one cadet say to another, "Do you still want to continue flying?" The answer was, "No way." Immediately the review was called off, and the commanding officer ordered all the cadets into the air, all in an effort to combat the shock that many were experiencing.

During our overseas training we continued to perform our normal functions of rehearsals, concerts, retreat ceremonies, pass in reviews, dance jobs and tours throughout the State of Texas. On one particular day we were required to take a series of shots that were deemed necessary for those about